

XXX.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

Eaton on the Birds of New York.

[New York State Museum. Memoir 12. Birds of New York. By Elon Howard Eaton. Part 2. Pp. 1-719, pls. 43-106. Albany (University of the State of New York), 1914. 4to.]

This massive volume is the second and concluding portion of a work, the first portion of which, published in 1910, contained an account of the Water-, Shore-, and Game-birds of the State of New York (see 'Ibis,' 1910, p. 740).

The first sixty pages of the present volume are occupied with chapters on ecology, economics, and bird-protection, including the provision of nesting-boxes and of special plantations for sheltering and attracting birds. The rest of the volume is taken up with the systematic descriptions, commencing with the Accipitres, or Raptores as they are commonly called in the United States, and completing the Passeres. No complete synonymy is given beyond a reference to the first description, to Dekay's 'Zoology of New York' (published in 1844), and the A. O. U. Check-list, which is followed throughout as regards classification and nomenclature. It is noticeable that, although descriptions of the species and subspecies as well as diagnoses of the orders and families are given, no attempt has been made to deal with the genera in the same way. The distribution within the State is given at some length, and a paragraph on haunts and habits is in very many cases illustrated by a "half-tone" of the nest and eggs or in some cases of the young bird, which greatly adds to the attractiveness of the volume, though it has unfortunately necessitated the use of a heavily loaded paper, which greatly adds to its weight.

Every species is illustrated on the series of sixty-four coloured plates prepared by the well-known American bird-artist Louis Agassiz Fuertes, and these are perhaps the most attractive feature of the volume. Among them we would specially commend those of the Arctic Three-toed Wood-

pecker, the Ruby-throated Humming-bird, and a group of Warblers (pl. 94). The duller-coloured birds, such as the Sparrows on plate 83, do not appear to us to be so satisfactory. Whether this is due to the method of reproduction or not it is difficult to say, but on this particular plate, at any rate, the browns are far too rufous; but, on the whole, the plates are certainly one of the most attractive series of bird-illustrations we have seen for a long time, and we must congratulate the author and the artist on having produced a remarkably handsome volume, which will doubtless serve its purpose as the standard work on the birds of the "Empire State" for many years to come.

Festa on his Collecting Expedition to South Italy.

[Escursioni zoologiche nei monti della Vallata del Sangro (Abruzzi). Dott. Enrico Festa. Boll. Mus. Zool. Anat., Torino, xxx. no. 692, 1915, pp. 1-12. 8 photos.]

In the summer of last year Dr. Festa, who has for some time been making zoological excursions in various countries on behalf of the Turin Museum, proceeded to the rough and high country of the Abruzzi in southern Italy, and made collections of birds and other animals, as well as of plants. In the present paper he gives an account of his travels and of the birds he observed. It is illustrated with some interesting photographs of scenery.

Ghidini on the Waxwing in Italy.

[La comparsa dei Beccofrosoni e di altri uccelli settentrionali nell'inverno 1913-14 nella regione dei tre laghi. Angelo Ghidini. Boll. soc. ticinese sci. nat. Lugano, vols. ix.-x. 1915, pp. 1-8.]

In the winter of 1913-14, as is well known, the Waxwing spread over the greater part of western and southern Europe in unusual abundance. It very seldom comes as far south as Italy, but in this paper Signor Ghidini gives a list of its recorded occurrences in the Italian Lake-districts, as well as some records of other northern birds which also but rarely come so far south.

Grinnell on a new Screech Owl.

[A new Subspecies of Screech Owl from California. By J. Grinnell. *Auk*, xxxii. 1915, pp. 59-60.]

Mr. Grinnell here describes a new subspecies of Owl under the name *Otus asio quercinus* from the southern and more arid districts of California; it differs from *O. a. bendirei* from the more humid districts north of San Francisco in its paler coloration.

Gurney's Ornithological Report for 1914.

[Ornithological Report for Norfolk (1914). By J. H. Gurney. *Zoologist*, 1915, pp. 121-146.]

So far as the occurrence of rare birds was concerned, 1914 seems to have been a disappointing year in Norfolk; the only events worthy of special notice, according to Mr. Gurney, were a Bluethroat in June, a Grey-headed Wagtail in September, and a Little Bustard in October. The Waxwing invasion of the winter 1913-4 soon spent itself, and none were observed later than April 5.

Cormorants, which Mr. Gurney tells us have not nested in Norfolk since Sir Thomas Browne wrote in the seventeenth century, have recently taken up their quarters on Lord Hastings' lake at Melton, and a pair have brought up a family in an old Heron's nest. We may recall some beautiful slides exhibited at a recent Meeting of the B. O. C. by Miss E. J. Turner illustrating this interesting event.

Although the Spoonbills continue to visit the Breydon mud-flats, they have not yet been induced to follow the example of the Cormorants and breed there. Let us hope that this may come about before long, and that we shall hear that a pair or two of these splendid birds have availed themselves of the opportunities afforded them.

Haagner on South African Birds.

[South African Ornithologists' Union. Bulletin Series. No. 3. A Descriptive List of South African Birds. Part i. (Families Struthionidæ to Scolopacidae). By Alwin Haagner, F.Z.S. Pretoria, 1914. 8vo.]

This is the first instalment of a list of South African birds

with very short condensed descriptions, which it is hoped will enable students of bird-life in South Africa to identify any strange specimens they may meet with. The list is founded partly on Reichenow's 'Vögel Afrikas' and partly on Stark and Selater's volumes, to both of which works references are given. The present part deals with the Waders, Ducks, and Sea-birds, and will no doubt be found very useful by all South African ornithologists.

Mathews on Australian Birds.

[The Birds of Australia. By G. M. Mathews. Vol. iv. part 2, pp. 81-192, pls. 210-223. London (Witherby & Co.): Feb. 1915.]

This part of Mr. Mathews's work continues the Anseriformes with the genera *Anas*, *Virago*, *Querquedula*, *Spatula*, *Malacorhynchus*, *Stictonetta*, *Nyroca*, *Erismatura*, and *Biziura*, and then proceeds to the Pelecaniformes, as far as the Cormorants are concerned. The author appeals for further particulars of the life-histories of the birds, even of the commoner forms, where the information leaves much to be desired.

He now uses *Anas superciliosa rogersi* for both the eastern and western Australian forms of the Black Duck, and upholds the subspecies against Messrs. Rothschild and Hartert, while he takes the opportunity (pp. 91-93) to animadvert upon what he considers inaccuracies in several other points of their work.

He holds to *Virago* of Newton for *Nettion castaneum* and *N. gibberifrons*, and suggests that the solution of the puzzling question of these two species may be solved by admitting that both sexes of the former, when fully adult, have the metallic green head and chestnut breast, though immature birds probably resemble *V. gibberifrons*, here denominated *rogersi* to distinguish it from the extralimital forms. *Querquedula querquedula* and *Spatula clypeata* are recorded for Australia with great doubt.

The generic name *Erismatura* is used in place of his former choice of *Oxyura*, on account of the priority of *Oxyurus*,

and the typical locality of *Biziura lobata* is corrected to West Australia.

The Pelecaniformes are prefaced by a long and thorough discussion of families and genera. Mr. Mathews tells us that he is a great genus-splitter, and his views are well worthy of consideration; but the majority of ornithologists may possibly not proceed to such extremes. In this part, however, we are only concerned with the Cormorants, which are placed under the genera *Phalacrocorax*, *Stictocarbo* (not Australian), *Mesocarbo*, *Hypoleucus*, and *Microcarbo*. The author considers *P. filamentosus* of China and Japan, = *P. capillatus*, equivalent to *Pelecanus sinensis* of Shaw and Nodder; he gives his ideas of the subspecies of *Phalacrocorax carbo*, proposing therewith a new form—*P. c. indicus*. We hope Mr. Mathews will make his printer spell *Phaëthon* properly in the next part; no one would recognize our mythological friend as *Phathon*, nor did our fathers drive in phaethons.

Miller on the Bird's Wing.

[Notes on Ptilosis, with special reference to the Feathering of the Wing. By W. De W. Miller. Bull. Amer. Mus. N. H. New York, xxxiv. 1915, pp. 129-140.]

Mr. Miller during recent years has had the opportunity of examining many specimens of birds in the flesh which have reached the American Museum from the New York Zoological Park and elsewhere, and in this paper he records his observations on various points of external anatomy, especially in those cases where he has found himself in disagreement with previously published statements.

A useful list is given of those birds which possess or do not possess the fifth secondary, a condition for which the somewhat cumbrous terms of eutaxy and diastataxy or quintocubitalism and aquintocubitalism have been used. He finds that *Philohela*, the American Woodcock, differs from *Scolopax* and all other members of the Gull-Plover group in being eutaxic (*i. e.* having the 5th secondary present).

Finally, a list is given of those groups of birds which are universally eutaxic or diastataxic, and those such as the Pigeons and Kingfishers which contain birds with both forms of wing.

Another point dealt with is the number of metacarpal primaries, which are six in all groups except the Grebes, Storks, Flamingoes, and Rheas, all of which possess seven.

The condition of the first primary covert, which is reduced in size in many forms, the presence of the vestigial eleventh primary, the alula, the outermost primary covert, the number of rectrices, and the presence or absence of the tuft on the oil-gland are all discussed. Finally, an interesting correction is made in regard to the Osprey (*Pandion*). It has always been stated that in this bird the feathers are without an aftershaft, and on this account they have been placed in a family distinct from the other Accipitrine birds. If Mr. Miller is correct in his observations that a distinct aftershaft is present, this matter will have to be reconsidered.

Moulton on the Birds of Borneo.

[Hand-List of the Birds of Borneo. By J. C. Moulton, Curator of the Sarawak Museum. Journ. Straits Branch R. Asiatic Soc., No. 67, 1914, pp. 125-191.]

Mr. Moulton has compiled a useful list of the birds of Borneo, which now number 555. The classification and general arrangement follow Sharpe's 'Hand-List,' but subspecies are indicated where necessary, and the subspecific names are printed in italics with the "authorities" for both the specific and subspecific names. This makes five words necessary to indicate a single item, thus:—*Caloperdix oculatem* Temm. *borneensis* Grant, a rather cumbersome addition to an already overloaded system of nomenclature.

No distributional notes are given, but so far as it is possible the name and date of the first collector and recorder are mentioned, the latter referring to an ample bibliography of 231 titles.

The list is prefaced with a short account of the ornithological history of Borneo. The earliest collectors were the

Dutchmen Diard (1826) and Salomon Müller (1836), while the north of the island remained quite unexplored until the arrival of Sir James Brooke in 1839 and his installation as Rajah in 1842. The earliest list of Bornean birds is that of Hugh Low, which forms an appendix to his book 'Sarawak : its Inhabitants and Productions,' published in 1848. This list contains the names of only 59 species of birds.

Robinson on Ringing Larus ridibundus.

[Report on the results of Ringing Black-headed Gulls. By H. W. Robinson. British Birds, viii. 1915, pp. 209-218.]

During the five years 1909-1913 Mr. Robinson has marked large numbers of nestlings of the Black-headed Gull, in order to trace their movements after leaving their parents' care. The greatest numbers have been ringed at the well-known gullery at Ravenglass, in Cumberland. Here 8096 were marked, and 345 have been recovered. On the whole, the movement of the birds may be described as a general scattering with a decided southward tendency along both our west and east coasts. Outside the home quarters, which are reckoned as from Solway to Dee, the largest percentage of recoveries were made on the corresponding portion of the east coast between Berwick and Humber. A few birds strayed to the north and west coasts of France, and three as far as the coast of Portugal.

Salvadori on the History of the Turin Museum.

[Notizie storiche intorno alla collezione ornitologica del Museo di Torino raccolte da Tommaso Salvadori. Mem. R. Accad. Sci. Torino (2), lxxv. no. 5, 1915, pp. 1-49.]

For fifty years since 1864 Count Salvadori has had charge of the collection of birds in the Turin Museum. Since that date the number of specimens in the Museum has increased from 5398 to over 21,000. Among these are the types or cotypes of 297 species, and examples of four extinct species, *Alca impennis*, *Conuropsis carolinensis*, *Ectopistes migratorius*, and *Fregilupus varius*, while two others, *Dromæus ater* and *Heteralocha acutirostris*, are marked as doubtfully so.

In the present memoir Salvadori gives a historical survey

of the growth of the Museum, commencing at 1811, when Bonelli became the Director. He was succeeded by Giuseppe Gené in 1832, who remained in charge until Salvadori himself succeeded him in the care of the collection of birds in 1864. Since that date the number of specimens has been augmented not only by acquisitions from special expeditions, but by gifts and judicious exchanges with other Museums, and it is in this manner that the large numbers of types and cotypes have been acquired.

This memoir will be of great value to all who are occupied in the monographs of special groups, and who wish to find out where certain of the older types are preserved.

Salvadori's recent minor Notices.

[Il *Podiceps infuscatus* Salvad. T. Salvadori. Boll. Mus. Zool. Anat. Torino, xxx. no. 694, 1915, pp. 1-3.]

[Un' Aquila dell' Africa Settentrionale. *Id. ibid.* no. 700, 1915, pp. 1-2.]

[Intorno ad alcuni uccelli del Kasai. Breve nota di T. Salvadori. Ann. Mus. Civ. Stor. Nat. Genova, xlvi. 1915, pp. 279-280.]

In the first of these short notes Count Salvadori draws attention to the fact that the Great Crested Grebe of the Ethiopian region differs from that of Europe in certain well-marked characters, and that it must be known in future as *Podiceps infuscatus* Salvadori. This name was first given to an example from southern Abyssinia by Salvadori himself in 1884, though he did not at that time realize that this distinct form extended to southern Africa.

In the second note an Eagle obtained in Tripoli, now in the Turin Museum, is identified with *Aquila occidentalis* Olphe-Galliard. This is a form of the Golden Eagle found in Spain and northern Africa. In the recently issued number of Hartert's 'Palæarctic Birds,' which has not yet reached us, this is shown to be identical with that described by Brehm (*in litt.*), and which was subsequently published by Olphe-Galliard (Faune orn. Eur. occ. ii. fasc. 18, 1889, p. 23: Spain).

The third paper contains the names of twenty-four species of birds collected in the Kasai Province of the Belgian Congo by a mining engineer, A. Crida, and sent to the Genoa Museum. No new species are described.

Miss Sherman on Feeding Humming-birds.

[Experiments in feeding Humming-birds during seven summers. By Althea R. Sherman. Smithsonian Report, Washington, for 1913-1914, pp. 459-468.]

In this paper Miss Sherman gives a most interesting account of a long series of feeding experiments with wild uncaged Ruby-throated Humming-birds (*Archilochus colubris*) at her home in Iowa.

Artificial flowers, such as nasturtiums or tiger lilies, with a bottle attached filled with granulated sugar dissolved in water, were fixed at different positions in the garden or "yard," and were for many successive summers visited by the Humming-birds.

Among the many interesting results noticed was that the birds, when they had learnt about the artificial flowers and their supply of syrup, neglected all the real flowers in the garden. It is believed that the birds which did occasionally visit the real flowers were all migrants, and that the same breeding individuals returned to the garden year after year. The birds usually arrived in May but did not become "regular boarders" until July. Miss Sherman believes that during June they were busy with their incubation duties, some two or three miles away in the woods. Only females came to the bottles, and the males appear to be very much scarcer than the females. By a careful series of measurements and weighings it was deduced that one of these little birds consumed in one day twice its own weight of sugar.

The paper, which is of very considerable value, is well worth perusal. It was first read at the Annual Meeting of the A. O. U. in New York, and has also been published in the Wilson Bulletin, published at Oberlein, Ohio.

Shufeldt on the Passenger Pigeon.

[A unique photograph—The last Passenger Pigeon. By R. W. Shufeldt, M.D. The Blue-Bird Magazine, vol. vii. 1915, pp. 85-86.]

[Anatomical and other notes on the Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*), lately living in the Cincinnati Zoological Gardens. By Dr. R. W. Shufeldt. Auk, xxxii. 1915, pp. 29-41, pls. iv.-vi.]

As has already been noticed in our pages, the last known living Passenger Pigeon died from old age on Sept. 7, 1914, at the Cincinnati Zoological Gardens. It had been bred in the Gardens, and was about 29 years old when it died. The body was immediately dispatched to the National Museum at Washington, and to Dr. Shufeldt was entrusted the task of making an examination of its anatomy, after it had been carefully skinned by Mr. Wm. Palmer. In the second of the papers listed Dr. Shufeldt writes an account of the results of the dissections which he made. These seem to confirm what was previously known of the bird's anatomy, an account of which had previously been written by William Macgillivray, and published in Audubon's great work on American birds.

In the first paper quoted will be found a reproduction of a photograph in colours of the same bird, taken by Dr. Shufeldt after its death. The magazine in which it appears is the organ of the Audubon Educational Board for Ohio cooperating with the National Association of Audubon Societies for the study and protection of North American bird-life.

Thorburn's British Birds.

[British Birds, written and illustrated by A. Thorburn, F.Z.S., with eighty plates in colour, showing over four hundred species. In four volumes. Vol. i. pp. viii+143, 20 pls. London (Longmans), 1915. 4to. £6 6s. for 4 vols.]

This is the first of four volumes in which Mr. Thorburn proposes to give us a collection of pictures of our British birds, and as the plates are admittedly the most important part of the work we will deal with them first.

Each plate contains representations of from three in the case of the larger, to eight or nine in the case of the smaller species ; as far as possible allied species appear on the same plate, and all the birds on the plate are drawn to scale, two-thirds life-size for the smaller to one-third life-size for the larger species. Most of the birds are depicted with appropriate backgrounds or surroundings, so that there appears to be some little confusion to our eye on some of the plates. The reproduction of the original drawings, which has been carried out by some form of three-colour process, certainly seems very perfect, though it is difficult to judge of this without a comparison with the original sketches. As for the pictures themselves, they combine great artistic merit with a most accurate representation of the birds, not only as to form and colouring, but as to attitude and general characteristics, and we believe that this work will certainly enhance Mr. Thorburn's reputation as our leading bird-artist. Our only criticism is that the plumage of every bird is in such a pink of perfection as is seldom seen in real life.

The letterpress is designedly subordinate to the pictures. It consists of short notes on the distribution and habits of each species, supplemented by such observations as have been made by Mr. Thorburn himself during his many years of bird-painting. The classification and nomenclature of Howard Saunders's 'Manual' is generally followed, and the present volume contains the descriptions and figures of all the Passerine birds except the Larks.

We congratulate Mr. Thorburn on the completion of his first volume, and shall look forward eagerly to the appearance of the other three. The only work which can in the least compare with the present one is Lord Lilford's 'Coloured Figures of the Birds of the British Isles,' which was published many years ago ; the last part was issued in 1897 ; two editions were, we believe, exhausted before the final part was issued. We wish Mr. Thorburn equal success.

Wetmore on a new Hawk from Porto Rico.

[A new *Accipiter* from Porto Rico, with notes on the allied forms of Cuba and San Domingo. By Alex. Wetmore. Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, xxvii. 1914, pp. 119-122.]

The title of this paper sufficiently shows its contents. The new form described is *Accipiter striatus venator*, and is closely allied to *A. s. striatus* of San Domingo, formerly known as *A. fringilloides* Vigors. Perhaps we may be allowed to add that it seems somewhat rash to distinguish a new subspecies of Hawk from the examination of a single example.

White on Birds from Central Australia.

[Scientific Notes on an Expedition into the Interior of Australia, carried out by Capt. S. A. White, M.B.O.U., from July to October 1913. Trans. R. Soc. S. Australia, xxxviii. 1914, pp. 407-474, pls. xxi.-xxxix. and maps.]

Capt. S. A. White has recently made a very interesting journey to the desert centre of Australia, rendered classical by the anthropological researches of Prof. Spencer and Mr. Gillen. Leaving Adelaide in July 1913, accompanied by his wife, he travelled from rail-head 1300 miles on camel-back, exploring the MacDonnel ranges and the country round Alice Springs. His primary object was to obtain birds and assist Mr. G. M. Mathews in his work on Australian birds, but he also collected in other branches of zoology. The present report contains a narrative and an account of the birds by Capt. White himself, together with that of the other groups and on the botany by other specialists.

About a hundred species of birds were met with and are duly listed in this report with interesting field-notes; the nomenclature followed is that of Mr. Mathews, but no new forms are here described, nor are there any critical or taxonomic notes. These will no doubt appear when the collection is examined by Mr. Mathews.

Capt. White is to be congratulated on having performed a most successful expedition into what is undoubtedly one of the most arid and forbidding tracts of country on the face of the globe.

Cassinia.

[*Cassinia*. A Bird Annual. Proceedings of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club of Philadelphia. No. xviii. for 1914, 1915, pp. 1-80.]

There is always a scholarly and literary flavour about 'Cassinia' which makes it quite the pleasantest of the American bird-magazines. This is perhaps due to the fact that at Philadelphia the foundations and early traditions of American scientific culture centre. We believe that the American Philosophical Society is the oldest scientific body on the western continent, while the Academy of Natural Sciences possesses the finest scientific library; both these institutions are located at Philadelphia.

The present number of 'Cassinia' opens with interesting reminiscences of some old Philadelphian collectors and taxidermists by Mr. Spencer Trotter; this is followed by an article on bird-observation on the lower reaches of the great Delaware river and some speculations on the causes of the movements and habits of Gulls by Mr. John Carter, while Mr. G. S. Morris sends a somewhat similar contribution on the birds of Tacony creek, which lies only just beyond the suburbs of the city. Mr. Henry Oldys points out in an interesting paper what an infinite variety there is in the song of individual birds, and gives, reduced to musical notation, eleven different variations—out of 118 others recorded in his notebooks—of that of the Meadow-Lark (*Sturnella magna*). The usual "Report on the Spring Migration," compiled by Mr. Witmer Stone, forms the concluding article of this excellent volume, which should certainly be much more widely known on this side of the Atlantic than it appears to be.

The Condor.

[*The Condor*. A Magazine of Western Ornithology. Vol. xvi. nos. 1-6, 1914.]

The volume of 'The Condor' for last year contains a large number of articles dealing with subjects chiefly of local interest to the ornithologists of the western United States.

As is usual, it is illustrated almost entirely by photographs taken by the writers of the articles, and many of these are of very high merit. It is impossible to do much more than mention some of the more important contributions in a short review of this nature.

Dealing with single species, Mr. H. J. Rust writes on the nesting of the Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter velox*) in Idaho, illustrating his notes with a very good series of photographs showing the gradual development of the young birds up to the age of 23 days, when they are already able to fly and have lost most of their original downy covering. Similar papers by Mr. J. B. Dixon on the history of a pair of Pacific Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus pacificus*) in San Diego Co., California, by Mr. D. R. Dickey on the nesting of the Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis*) in Ventura Co., California, and by the Treganza brothers on the Snowy Heron (*Ardea candidissima*) in Utah are also well illustrated.

Of local lists Mr. G. Willett writes on the birds of Sitka, Alaska, Mr. S. G. Jewett on birds from Netarts Bay, Oregon, Mr. A. A. Saunders on the birds of Teton Co., north Montana, and Mr. H. A. Edwards on birds from the Sierra Madre in southern California.

The only article dealing with birds outside the Nearctic region is that of Mr. A. van Rossem on the life-history and breeding-habits of the Derby Flycatcher (*Pitangus sulphuratus derbianus*) in San Salvador, Central America. During a short excursion to Fryppe, at an elevation of 3700 ft. in the Sierras of California, Mr. M. S. Ray was fortunate enough to find the nest and eggs of the Hermit Warbler (*Dendroica occidentalis*), one of the rarest of all the western Warblers, as well as those of the Sierran Hermit Thrush (*Hylocichla guttata sequoiensis*) and the Saw-whet Owl (*Cryptoglaux acadica*).

Mr. J. E. Thayer gives us some information about the nest and eggs, probably the first authentic ones taken, of the Kittlitz Murrelet (*Brachyramphus brevirostris*), which he obtained from Pavloff Bay in the Alaska Peninsula.

An interesting study of the Rock-wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) is contributed by Mr. H. S. Swarth. The typical form is a wide-spread type, ranging from the Great Plains region east of the Rockies to the Pacific, and from the floor of the hottest desert to the summit of the coldest mountain-top without appreciable variation; when we come to the islands off the coast of southern and lower California, though the birds on most of the islands conform to the mainland types, we find that one subspecies is distinguishable—*Salpinctes o. pulverius* from San Nicolas and San Clemente Islands. Another new subspecies is here described, *S. guadeloupensis proximus*, from the Island of San Martin, off the coast of Lower California.

Of papers of economic interest, Mr. H. C. Bryant contributes an important one dealing with a survey of the breeding-grounds of Ducks in California, Mr. A. B. Howell one on the destruction of small birds caused by the fumigation process to which the trees in the citrus orchards of California are subjected to clean off black scale, and Mr. C. H. Kennedy one on the effects of irrigation on bird-life in the Yukima Valley in Washington State.

Journal of the S. Afr. Orn. Union.

[The Journal of the South African Ornithologists' Union. Edited by A. K. Haagner, F.Z.S. Vol. x. no. 1, Dec. 1914. pp. 1-46.]

Doubtless on account of the war the annual volume of the South African Ornithologists' Union is somewhat diminished, and consists of one thin number only. There are included in it field-notes on birds of the Zimliti district near Beira and of the Sabi district of the Transvaal by Mr. P. A. Sheppard and Capt. C. Ingle respectively, while the editor, Mr. Haagner, contributes some notes on the Game- and Water-Birds of the Pretoria bush-veld made during a recent hunting-trip of only eight days' duration, when he found evidence of the breeding of the White-faced Duck (*Dendrocygna viduata*), a species previously unknown to nest in South Africa. He met with the Knob-billed Duck (*Sarkidiornis melanotus*) breeding in the pools

of the Crocodile River. This Duck's most southerly breeding-ground was previously believed to be Lake Ngami. Other articles are by Mr. B. C. R. Langford on a curious plumage-variation in a Lanner (*Falco biarmicus*), and on the breeding of the Kurrichaine Button-Quail (*Turnix lepurana*) by Mr. Mörs. Finally, we must congratulate Mr. Haagner on his promotion to the post of Director of the Zoological Gardens in Pretoria.

Yearbook of the Dutch Bird-Club.

[Club van Nederlandsche Vogelkundigen. Jaarbericht, no. 4. Deventer, 1914.]

Under its energetic President, Baron Snouckaert van Schanburg, the Dutch bird-club occupies itself chiefly with matters of local importance in Holland. The President himself gives us his usual report on the occurrence of rare birds in the Netherlands between Oct. 1913 and Sept. 1914. It does not seem yet certain whether the British Song-Thrush occurs in Holland or not. In another short note he discusses the identification of the Little Owl of Palestine, and comes to the conclusion that two examples in his collection obtained near Jerusalem should be referred to *Athene noctua glaux*, the Egyptian subspecies, rather than to Hartert's *A. n. lilith*, which is said by the last-named author to inhabit Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia. Another article by Baron Snouckart deals with a pleasant five weeks ramble through Italy with notes on the birds observed.

The only other contribution of any length is one by M. A. Crèvecoeur on the avifauna of the Hague and its neighbourhood, accompanied by a map and topographical information. The number of species recorded is 146.

List of other Ornithological Publications received.

- BUTERLIN, S. A. Birds of the Ussuri-land. And other papers from Russian periodicals.
 MOULTON, J. C. Thirteenth Report on the Sarawak Museum, 1914. (Sarawak, 1915.)